

VZCZCXRO0564
OO RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #0895/01 2992057
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 262057Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0470
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 2403
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 0439
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 2114
RUEHMT/AMCONSUL MONTREAL 0419
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC 1480
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCOWCV/CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 000895

SIPDIS

STATE FOR S, C, WHA/CAR, DRL, S/CRS,
INL FOR KEVIN BROWN, HEATHER WILD AND MEAGAN MCBRIDE
INR/IAA
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/02/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: PREVAL CONSOLIDATING POWER

REF: A. PORT AU PRINCE 788
[1](#)B. PORT AU PRINCE 822
[1](#)C. PORT AU PRINCE 879
[1](#)D. PORT AU PRINCE 888
[1](#)E. PORT AU PRINCE 889
[1](#)F. PORT AU PRINCE 887

PORT AU PR 00000895 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Ambassador Kenneth H. Merten. Reason: E.O. 12958 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: The Senate convocation of Prime Minister Pierre-Louis and her government for a probable vote of no confidence is the latest of a series of moves (reported in reftels) by the Senate with the suspected approval - tacit or active - of President Preval. This will consolidate his power ahead of legislative and presidential elections. By aiming to gain a majority in Parliament and appointing new judges loyal to him on the Supreme Court, Preval is putting himself in a position to push through controversial constitutional reforms and retain a measure of political influence, direct or indirect, after his term is over in [1](#)2011. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) On October 22, the Senate convoked Prime Minister Michelle Pierre-Louis to an interpellation on October 29. A vote of no confidence on that day would force the Prime Minister and all other ministers to resign, just one year into the job. The move comes at the request of six Senators close to Preval, who are ostensibly blaming the Prime Minister for the mismanagement of USD 197 million in hurricane-relief funds.

[1](#)3. (SBU) There had been rumors that several members of Pierre-Louis cabinet were at risk of being convoked in front of Parliament, specifically Minister of Justice Exume and Minister of Finance Dorsainvil. Exume's plight came as no surprise: he is a protege of the Prime Minister, and has butted heads with Preval over justice sector matters. Preval recently named Claudy Gassant, a former controversial Chief Prosecutor, as one of his advisors on justice and there were reports that Gassant was maneuvering to have Exume removed by the Parliament (reftel E).

[1](#)4. (C) Dorsainvil had served under the previous Prime

Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis, and was believed to be close to Preval until recently. Observers speculate that Dorsainvil's refusal to cooperate with Preval on spending allocations (or perhaps even pay-offs) caused him to lose the President's protection.

15. (SBU) The move against Pierre Louis, undoubtedly with the President's approval, is the culmination of a series of steps that have consolidated Preval's power and sidelined the (admittedly weak and fractious) opposition political parties. The Executive began alienating opposition parties by excluding Fanmi Lavalas from the Senatorial elections earlier this year over a technicality and by lending its support to candidates close to Preval. The Provisional Electoral Council (believed by the opposition to have been largely loyal to Preval) lent little legitimacy to the elections, and chose to ignore fraud allegations in two departments. Eight candidates out of the 11 newly elected senators were close to Preval. Their forced validation (they were seated by a non-constitutional maneuver over the objections of the opposition) only further alienated opposition parties (reftel A) and gave Preval a strong majority in the Senate.

16. (C) Within three weeks of consolidating that loyal majority, Preval has moved to pass a constitutional reform proposal, name a new Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) that left out opposition parties (septel) and replace the heads of all Senate commissions (committees). This also cleared the way for him to replace Supreme Court judges at his discretion (reftel D). After naming a CASEC representative (elected communal leader), Jean Toussaint, as a member of the CEP to presumably show the importance of their role, Preval arrived unannounced at a meeting of the Federation of CASECS on

PORT AU PR 00000895 002.2 OF 002

October 24, and called upon them to join him in the creation of a broad platform for a new party. He is quoted as having said "those who believe will be saved, and those who do not will be condemned," a quote since confirmed by Yves Cristalin (protect), one of Preval's advisors present at that meeting. The non-Aristide part of Lavalas has offered to join the new party if given sufficient positions in a new government.

17. (C) COMMENT. Preval is playing a complex multi-level game. This is not (or not just) about political support of a Prime Minister or a couple of Ministers, although if they leave he obviously benefits. He has carefully moved to gain influence over the Senate, and is aiming to influence the upcoming legislative elections whether held in January or as late as May 2010. He is also ensured of influence on the constitutional reform process, both through control of the Senate and now through the ability to pack the Supreme Court. While many of our contacts speculate that Preval is trying to find a way to remain a force in Haitian politics after his term ends in 2011, we believe Preval is looking to protect himself and his legacy by naming a court loyal to him and by engineering the election of a President and Parliament in 2010 who are at a minimum not hostile to him.

18. (C) Preval is figuring that with control of the Senate and most of the Deputies, he can secure the appointment of a new Prime Minister and ministers with minimal loss of time and momentum. We anticipate there will be little reaction on the street if the work of government doesn't come to a halt as it did during the long hiatus between Prime Ministers Alexis and Pierre-Louis. However, even with a political opposition that is both divided and discredited, the change in government could lead to a loss of momentum on development and investment.

MERTEN